

City of Chula Vista Existing Home Energy Sustainability Ordinance (EHSO)

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

Background: Homes in Chula Vista have been built over the years to meet the applicable energy related building codes which were first put in place in 1978. Since then new homes have gotten healthier and more efficient while some existing homes have gotten left behind. To help address these older homes the City is educating residents about retrofit opportunities and requiring older homes undergoing additions or remodels to make certain targeted upgrades, where applicable and feasible, to bring them closer to current codes.

Who Needs to Comply? These energy saving improvements are something most homes can benefit from but because newer homes have already been built to meet more recent energy code the focus of this policy is homes built in Chula Vista before 2006. Any home that does not have these measures should evaluate if they would benefit their home, but this ordinance is focused on homes that are doing alterations or remodels. Under this ordinance the definition of “remodel” is tied to structural changes that trigger the need for a permit. Please review the potential examples below to better understand what projects need to comply.

What projects trigger this requirement?

- Adding square footage
- Moving interior walls or other structural elements
- Adding or moving windows and doors

What projects do NOT trigger this requirement?

- Adding new tile or flooring
- Bathroom fixtures
- Lighting fixtures
- Appliances
- Adding or moving a kitchen island
- Adding or changing counters
- Patio or landscaping
- Adding an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU/JADU)
- Projects that are medically necessary
- Repairing, without moving, structural elements

Location	Year Home Was Built	Required Energy Efficiency Measures
All City	2006	0
All zip codes except 91914	2005 to 1979	2
All zip codes except 91914	1978 or older	3
91914	2005 or older	4

How many energy efficiency measures do I need to include in my project? Based on the age and location of the home, different energy saving measures will be required. Please use the table above to determine how many of the energy efficiency measures will be required if your home undergoes an alteration or addition. You can include any energy efficiency measures included on the list of qualified measures at the end of this document. For more information on cost effectiveness or other detail please

review “Chula Vista Energy Efficiency Ordinance Overview” at www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/clean/retrofit.

What if I have already Made Similar Upgrades? If you have already made these, or similar, upgrades or they will be a part of your home project, you will be benefiting from a more energy efficient home and do not need to make any additional upgrades. Please review the list of exemptions below:

- Similar measures have already been completed
 - Including participation in a low-income weatherization program (a deferment will be provided to qualifying applicants that have applied for weatherization programs but not received the work yet)
- Home achieves a Home Energy Score (HES) score of at least 8 out of 10
- Home has on-site photovoltaics (PV) offsetting at least 95% of the annual electricity and gas-equivalent usage
- An alternative, voluntary, set of energy measures is concurrently being completed that will achieve equivalent energy savings to the prescriptive packages

Homes that have already made similar improvements can pre-certify their home before they start any project by completing the relevant “Pre-Existing Measure Certification” that can be found at www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/clean/retrofit.

What if These Upgrades Will Not Work for My Project? Due to unique characteristics of some homes, these upgrades may not work as intended for all residents. To help ensure that residents are not negatively impacted by this requirement the following additional exemptions are also allowed.

- Low-Income Resident – Applicants who can demonstrate they qualify as a low-income household are exempt
- Project Value Cutoff - If the cost of completing energy efficiency measures required under this policy exceeds 20% of the overall project cost without those measures, permit applicants can propose a more limited set from among the required measures which does not exceed 20%
- A measure is beyond the authority of the homeowner due to HOA covenant
- Prescribed measures would be technically infeasible or not be cost-effective due to unique characteristics of home or other special circumstances

If you have more questions please contact the City of Chula Vista’s Conservation Section at 619-409-3893 or conservation@chulavistaca.gov.

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Appendix A: Eligible EHSO Prescriptive Energy Efficiency Measures

Name	Description	Benefit	Implementation Notes
LED Lighting	Replace screw-in halogen, incandescent or CFL light bulbs with LED light bulbs	LED lights can use up to 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs and are 15% more efficient than average Compact Florescent Light (CFL) Bulbs.	Not applicable to lights plugged into outlets, recommend Energy Star bulbs. Historic fixtures exempt if not compatible with LED bulbs.
Water Heating Package	A. Water Heater Blanket - Insulate exterior of storage water heaters manufactured before April 2015. B. Hot Water Pipe Insulation - Insulate all accessible hot water pipes with R-3 pipe insulation. C. Low Flow Fixtures - Upgrade sink and shower fittings to maximum flow rates of 1.8 gallons per minute (gpm) for showerheads and kitchen faucets, and 1.2 gpm for bathroom faucets.	Water heating can account for up to 50% of an average home's natural gas usage. By insulating the tank (if not already insulated) and exposed piping you can minimize the amount of heat that is lost on its way to you. By utilizing low flow faucets, aerators and low flow showerheads you not only save water but also save the energy used to heat up that water.	Only accessible hot water pipes need to be insulated. Historic fixtures exempt if not compatible with water efficiency measures.
Attic Insulation	Add attic insulation in buildings with vented attic spaces to meet R-38.	Attic insulation helps your home maintain a stable temperature.	Homes with existing insulation greater than R-5 in Climate Zone 7 or greater than R-19 in Climate Zone 10 are exempt. Homes without vented attics are exempt.
Duct Sealing	Air seal all accessible ductwork with a goal of reducing duct leakage to be equal to or less than 15% of system airflow.	Duct leakage can be as high as 30% in average California homes. This means that up to 30% of the air you are paying to heat or cool is being lost before it reaches its destination. Additionally, leaky ducts can allow a pathway for dust or other indoor air quality concerns to enter your rooms.	
Air Sealing	Apply air sealing practices throughout all accessible areas of the building. Homes with one or more vented combustion	Houses built over the past five years are over 20 percent tighter than those built a decade earlier. This means the air you paid to	Only accessible areas need to be sealed. Attics with crawl space are considered accessible.

	appliances MUST have a BPI Combustion Appliance Safety Inspection performed after air sealing.	heat or cool can escape and increases your energy bills and outside pollutants can enter your home. By sealing your home you can make it safer and healthier.	
Cool Roof	Only applicable if project includes re-roofing or addition of steep slope roofs. Install a roofing product rated by the Cool Roof Rating Council (CRRC) with an aged solar reflectance of 0.25 or higher and thermal emittance of 0.75 or higher.	Cool roofs help save energy by increasing the amount of solar energy that get reflected away from your home and minimize the need for cooling on hot summer days.	Only for steep slope roofs (shallow slope roofs already covered).
Windows	Replace existing single pane windows with a dual pane product.	Energy efficiency windows not only reduce heating and cooling costs they can also reduce the ability of moisture and noise to enter your home.	Look for U-factor equal to 0.32 or lower and a Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) equal to 0.25 or lower
Water Heater Replacement	High Efficiency Heat Pump Water Heater: Replace natural gas storage water heater, or, tankless water heater having an Energy Factor of .81 or less, with Heat Pump Water Heater -or- High Efficiency Tankless Water Heater: Replace natural gas storage water heater, or, less efficient tankless water with tankless water heater.	About 18% of average homes energy is used for heating water. Heat Pump Water heaters are on average 200% to 300% more efficient than traditional water heaters while tankless units are 8% to 34% more efficient. Additionally because heat pump water heaters store their hot water they can minimize energy usage during peak periods.	Heat Pump Water Heater with Uniform Energy Factor (UEF) of at least 3.1 (Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance Tier 3). -or- Tankless water heater with a minimum UEF of 0.96.
Air Conditioner Replacement	High Efficiency Air Conditioner: Replace an existing air conditioner with an high efficiency air conditioner. -or- High Efficiency Heat Pump: Replace an existing air conditioner with a Heat Pump	When running air conditioners can be the biggest energy user in a home so installing high efficiency units can prevent higher bills. It is also important to ensure ducting is sealed and installed and filters are regularly changed.	Install an air conditioner or heat pump rated to at least 18 SEER